



MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM #16

DATE: APRIL 5, 2010
TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS
FROM: STAFF
SUBJECT: CORRESPONDENCE AND ATTENDANCE FORM

Information only.

	1/4	2/1	3/1									
Ex Officio Members –												
DONN, Gary Florida Dept. of Trans.	*	P	P									
GOODRICH, Joan Economic Development Liaison	P	P	P									
GRAY, Tim Dept. of Environmental Protection	P	P	*									
WATERS, Bert SFWMD	P	P	P									

P = Present

A = Absent

D = Designee Present

* = Excused Absence

- = Not Yet Appointed

CC = Via Conference Call

** Please note – July & August Meetings Executive Committee Only

North Central Florida Regional Planning Council

2009 NW 67 PLACE, SUITE A, GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA 32653-1603
(352)955-2200 SUNCOM 625-2200 FAX (352) 955-2209



February 25, 2010

Honorable Joseph Scuotto, Chair
South Florida Regional Planning Council
3440 Hollywood Boulevard, Suite 140
Hollywood, FL 33021

RE: Opposition to the Interbasin Transfer of Water

Dear Chair Scuotto:

The recent Senate Committee Environmental Preservation and Conservation interim report has caused the North Central Florida Regional Planning Council much concern. Particularly disturbing are the proposed changes to Florida Water Law. The proposed water policy changes would have a potentially detrimental impact on the natural resources and economy of our region.

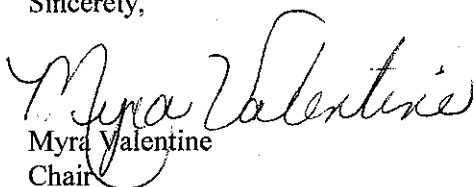
The Council recently adopted a resolution opposing the interbasin transfer of water and the establishment of a central regulatory commission for water resources supply development. Please find enclosed a copy of Resolution 2010-01 adopted by the Council on January 28, 2010.

The Council has found that the existing state policy of "local sources first" combined with the protection of minimum flows and levels for natural resource protection and future growth and economic development as the most appropriate approach to statewide water supply planning and consumption. In addition, the Council supports the fundamental principles of Florida Water Law which require a showing that a proposed use of water is a reasonable, beneficial use, will not interfere with an existing legal use of water and is consistent with the public interest.

In summary, the Council supports existing state law and policy concerning the management of our valuable water resources. These existing laws and policies will help ensure an economically and environmentally sustainable future for all of Florida.

If you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact our Executive Director, Scott Koons, AICP, at (352) 955-2200, ext. 101.

Sincerely,


Myra Valentine
Chair

Enclosure

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RESOLUTION NO. 2010-01

A RESOLUTION OF THE NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA
REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL OPPOSING THE INTERBASIN
TRANSFER OF WATER AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A
CENTRAL REGULATORY COMMISSION FOR WATER
RESOURCES SUPPLY DEVELOPMENT

WHEREAS, the Florida Senate Committee on Environmental Preservation and Conservation has recently released an interim report containing findings and recommendations to the Governor, the President of the Florida Senate, and the Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives regarding the water needs of the State in interim report 2010-114 entitled, Chapter 373, Florida Statutes, Water Resources; and

WHEREAS, said Florida Senate Committee on Environmental Preservation and Conservation interim report recommends that the "local sources first" policy currently in state statute be reviewed and that a central regulatory commission that oversees Florida's water resources and supply development to be created; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 186.502(1)(4), Florida Statutes, specifically states that regional planning councils are recognized as Florida's only multipurpose regional entity that is in a position to plan for and coordinate intergovernmental solutions to growth-related problems on greater-than-local issues; and

WHEREAS, the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan was adopted by the North Central Florida Regional Planning Council (hereafter referred to as the "Planning Council") on May 28, 1997 and amended February 27, 2003; and

WHEREAS, the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan is consistent with the State Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan maps and identifies as Natural Resources of Regional Significance coastal and marine resources including but not limited to the Big Bend Salt Marsh and the Big Bend Seagrass Beds; groundwater resources, including but not limited to the Floridan Aquifer and areas of high recharge potential to the Floridan Aquifer; private and public lands held for conservation and resource-based recreation purposes; water bodies identified in the Suwannee River Water Management District Surface Water Improvement Management program; surface water systems including but not limited to coastal freshwater wetlands, upland freshwater wetlands, lakes, the Suwannee River, and springs (hereafter referred to as "Natural Resources of Regional Significance"); and

WHEREAS, Regional Policy 2.4.3 of the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan states, "Conserve the region's Natural Resources of Regional Significance as economic as well as natural resource assets;" and

WHEREAS, Regional Goal 4.2 of the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan states, "Maintain an adequate supply of high-quality groundwater to meet the needs of north central Florida residents, in recognition of its importance to the continued growth and development of the region;" and

WHEREAS, Regional Policy 4.2.1 of the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan states, "Ensure that state policy is adopted which would require water shortage areas to establish other alternatives, such as desalinization, prior to the interbasin transfer of water to serve their needs;" and

WHEREAS, Regional Policy 4.2.3 of the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan states, "Continue to increase the region's knowledge of the relationship between ground and surface waters, the surface water needs of native species and natural systems, including minimum flows necessary to the survival of native species and natural systems;" and

WHEREAS, Regional Goal 4.6 of the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan states, "Maintain the quantity and quality of the region's surface water systems in recognition of their importance to the continued growth and development of the region;" and

WHEREAS, Florida Statutes requires water management districts to develop water supply plans which identify water supply needs for the next 20 years; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, requires local governments to include in their comprehensive plan potable water elements a work plan, covering at least a 10-year planning period, for building water supply facilities that are identified in the element as necessary to serve existing and new development, and for which the local government is responsible; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Council reviews and comments on local government comprehensive plans and plan amendments regarding potential adverse impacts to Natural Resources of Regional Significance and recommends modifications to protect said resources from adverse impacts as per Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, to further the implementation of the goals and policies of the regional plan; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Council reviews and provides recommendations to local governments with regards to potential adverse impacts to Natural Resources of Regional Significance as a result of Developments of Regional Impact and recommends modifications to protect said resources from adverse impacts as per Chapter 380.06, Florida Statutes, to further the implementation of the goals and policies of the regional plan; and

WHEREAS, the minimum flows and levels of all water-dependent Natural Resources of Regional Significance have not yet been determined; and

WHEREAS, the water consumption needs of north central Florida for the next 100 years have not yet been forecasted; and

WHEREAS, changes to the existing "local sources first" state policy and the interbasin transfer of water is inconsistent with the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan as adopted by the Planning Council, specifically Policy 2.4.3, Goal 4.2, Policy 4.2.1, Policy 4.2.3 and Goal 4.6; and

WHEREAS, any discussion of regional water transfer is premature until minimum flows and levels are established for all water-dependent Natural Resources of Regional Significance to assure the continued economic growth and development of the region for the next 100 years without significant adverse impacts to said water-dependent Natural Resources of Regional Significance.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL, THAT:

Section 1. The Planning Council recognizes Natural Resources of Regional Significance are valuable regional economic resources.

Section 2. The Planning Council finds that the interbasin transfer of water may cause permanent, irreparable harm to Natural Resources of Regional Significance.

Section 3. The Planning Council finds water conservation, re-use, and construction of desalination plants under the current water supply planning process as better alternatives than the interbasin transfer of water.

Section 4. The Planning Council finds additional funding to expedite the process of establishing minimum flows and levels for all water-dependent Natural Resources of Regional Significance combined with clearer legislative direction to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection with regards to its responsibility in ensuring an adequate water supply statewide as better alternatives than the establishment of a central regulatory commission to oversee water resources supply and development.

Section 5. The Planning Council continues to find the existing state policy of "local sources first" combined with the protection of minimum flows and levels for natural resource protection and future growth and economic development as the most appropriate approach to statewide water supply planning and consumption.

Section 6. The Planning Council supports the fundamental principles of Florida Water Law which require a showing that a proposed use of water is a reasonable, beneficial use, will not interfere with an existing legal use of water, and is consistent with the public interest.

Section 7. The Planning Council encourages all local governments and elected officials to voice their concerns regarding the interbasin transfer of water to their state elected officials.

Section 8. The Planning Council directs the Chair to distribute copies of this Resolution to the Governor of Florida, the President of the Florida Senate, the Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives, members of appropriate legislative committees, local legislative delegation, the Executive Directors of the St. Johns and Suwannee River Water Management Districts, the Florida Association of Counties, Florida League of Cities, north central Florida local governments, the Executive Directors of all regional planning councils, and to other interested citizens and organizations.

Section 9. This Resolution shall be effective upon adoption.

DULY ADOPTED, in regular session, this 28th day of January, 2010.

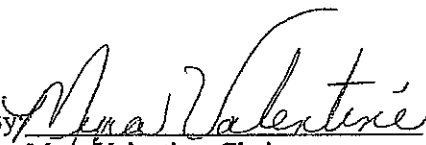
ATTEST:

NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA
REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

By:


Scott R. Koons, AICP, Executive Director

By:


Myra Valentine, Chair